



City of Gaithersburg Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Gaithersburg Book Festival Announces High School Poetry Contest Finalists

Voting for Fan Favorite Entry Closes May 6

Gaithersburg, Md. – April 3, 2019 – The [Gaithersburg Book Festival](#) has selected the finalists for its inaugural poetry contest for high school students. The first-, second- and third-place winners and the fan favorite will be announced at the 10th Annual Festival on Saturday, May 18, 2019.

The finalists, listed in alphabetical order with the school they attend and city in which they reside, are:

- Emma Allen – Eleanor Roosevelt High School (Hyattsville, Md.)
- Chloe Cattaneo – Washington Latin PCS (Washington, D.C.)
- Olivia Cordle – Quince Orchard High School (Gaithersburg, Md.)
- Esther Palmer – Oakton High School (Oak Hill, Va.)
- Rowan Smith – Poolesville High School (Gaithersburg, Md.)
- Emily Tian – Richard Montgomery High School (North Potomac, Md.)
- Rachel Tsai – Oakton High School (Herndon, Va.)
- Lydia Wei – Richard Montgomery High School (Gaithersburg, Md.)
- Olivia Yu – Oakton High School (Vienna, Va.)
- Rachel Hannah Zozobrado – Winston Churchill High School (Potomac, Md.)

[Maryland Poet Laureate Grace Cavalieri](#), who also will be a featured presenter at the Festival, will serve as the 2019 judge, selecting the top three entries.

“This was our first-ever poetry contest and we were so happy with the level of participation and the high quality of the entries,” said Jud Ashman, founder of the Festival and Mayor of the City of Gaithersburg. “There are some genuinely talented young writers and poets in our region, and it makes us all proud to give them a big spotlight at the Gaithersburg Book Festival.”

The 10 finalist poems have been posted to the Gaithersburg Book Festival website so visitors can read the entries and [vote for their favorite](#). Fan favorite voting will close on Monday, May 6, at 11 p.m. ET.

Prizes for first-, second- and third-place winners, provided courtesy of [Johns Hopkins University Montgomery County](#), are \$250, \$100 and \$50, respectively. The fan favorite winner will receive \$25. Contest winners will be

announced during a presentation at 2:30 p.m. on the Marvin Gaye Stage at the Festival, with Poet Laureate Cavalieri presenting the awards.

To be eligible for the poetry contest, students had to be enrolled in grades 9-12 at a public or private school, or be in a homeschool program, for the 2018-19 school year. Additionally, entrants had to reside in Maryland, Virginia or the District of Columbia.

In further celebration of the written word, Mayor Ashman will officially proclaim April as Poetry Month in the City of Gaithersburg. A proclamation will be presented to Lucinda Marshall – Gaithersburg Book Festival poetry coordinator, who also arranges monthly Diverse Poetry readings at the Gaithersburg Library – at the Mayor and City Council meeting on Monday, April 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 31 S. Summit Avenue.

About the Gaithersburg Book Festival

The Gaithersburg Book Festival is an annual all-day celebration of books, writers and literary excellence. One of the premier literary events in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, the 2019 Festival is scheduled for Saturday, May 18, on the grounds of Gaithersburg City Hall, in Olde Towne Gaithersburg, Md. Activities will include author appearances, discussions and book signings; writing workshops; a Children's Village; onsite sales of new and used books; literary exhibitors and food, drink, ice cream and more. FREE admission and accessible shuttle will be available from Shady Grove Metro and Lakeforest Mall. The Gaithersburg Book Festival also hosts author events in Montgomery County throughout the year as a way to encourage continued appreciation for all things literary. For more information please visit www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org or follow on Twitter [@GburgBookFest](https://twitter.com/GburgBookFest).

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